Interview with Leonard L. Bacon

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

LEONARD L. BACON

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Today is March 20th, 1990. This is an interview with retired Foreign Service Officer Leonard L. Bacon. This interview is being done on behalf of The Foreign Affairs Oral History Program. I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Mr. Bacon, I wonder if you'd give me a little background. Where did you come from?

BACON: I'm from upstate New York. I was born near Rochester in 1907, and educated in the local schools there—high school—went to Yale College, graduated in '28; went to Harvard Law School and graduated in '31; practiced law in Rochester until 1942; enlisted in the Army as an infantryman and went to England in the fall of '43, Normandy on D-Day in '44 which was a little out of character for an upstate New York lawyer.

Q: You were there on D-Day?

BACON: Yes. I have the arrowhead for that.

Q: What type of work were you doing?

BACON: Well, since I knew some French and German, I was picked for the counter-intelligence corps, which had a unit at that time in the V-corps; and there was absolutely

no need at the moment for a counter-intelligence corps on D-Day, but everybody was intent on being on the spot where the action was. It was just like Granada, you know, you have to get your ticket punched. I remained with V-corps—except when I was detached at different times; once to the French Second Armored Division. The way had been cleared for them to have the honor of taking Paris but we also wanted some of the honor. So some of our people were added to the French Second Armored, and rejoined V-corps and went on to Malmedy and the Battle of the Bulge. And from there through Germany and into Czechoslovakia where I was when the war ended. And then almost immediately returned to the U.S. to Fort Bragg, but I never quite reached Fort Bragg because we dropped the bomb and the war was effectively over. At that time the Stars & Stripes had been running some blind ads...

Q: The Stars & Stripes is the GI newspaper.

BACON: Right. “...anybody interested in service abroad after the war, please get in touch with us at the following address...” And it turned out to be old State War Navy building and they were interested in getting people in Safe Haven program which was a search and recovery of enemy assets which had been concealed in neutral countries during the war. I don't know if you've ever met Herb Cummings?

Q: No, I haven't.

BACON: Or Woody Waller. Anyway, they were both concerned with that. I was given my choice of posts as it was still around September of '45, and being already in the U.S. I was asked, “Well, do you want Sweden, or do you want Argentina, or how about Switzerland.” I said, “Can my wife go with me to Switzerland?” They said, “Oh, sure.” So that settled that right away. Switzerland was better off during the war than we were here. They had all the Coca Cola they needed. So I went to the Consulate in Zurich as a member of the Foreign Service Auxiliary, and when lateral transfers were being encouraged I came

back to Washington after about a year and a half, had an oral examination, and I was subsequently made an FSO Class 4.

Q: Let me ask you a little about what you were doing in Switzerland with the Safe Haven Program. You were there from '46 to '47.

BACON: The very beginning of '46 to '47. That was to try to ferret out from the Swiss banks, art galleries—commercial art galleries, that is, and other places, and through records that were being discovered in Germany at the time, as to where the goods that people like Goring had confiscated and salted away in a neutral country. Many of the works of art, of course, were the forbidden type of modern art anyhow, but this was a good way of preserving for personal benefit. And also bank accounts. There were some side effects. General Ernst Kaltenbrunner was on trial at Nuremberg. As head of the Gestapo he had responsibility for labor camps, and at the trial he bethought himself of a visit by the Swiss International Red Cross to the camp to see how things were. He thought that members of the Swiss mission could testify in his favor. All they could testify to was what they saw at their visit which was two weeks before the end of hostilities. He was condemned and executed later on. But he wanted this affidavit signed. It took about three months to get from Nuremberg to Washington to Switzerland. By then the trial was nearly over. I took it to Berne pointing out that if it took three months to get back again after it had been signed, he'd surely be condemned and probably dead. So the Minister Counselor there said, “Perhaps you'd like to take it?” And I said, “That's what I had in mind.” He said, “Don't you know that we can't get involved in judicial actions here in Switzerland under our treaty with Switzerland?” I said, “Yes, but the Swiss don't recognize this court. From their point of view it's not a court at all.” So he laughed and said, “All right. We'll get you a military pass to get into Germany and get to Nuremberg.” So I did. I saw the whole thing and the last few days; all of the defendants—including Goring—were still there. So that was something of a high point.

Q: Were you working on the accounts...there must have been many accounts of Jews from Germany who put their money in Swiss accounts and then they were killed, and these things must have been sort of in limbo.

BACON: I don't recall any particular action on that basis. Probably their relatives were doing what they could in that way. The Swiss had to modify their banking laws. Up to that time lawyers, trustees, and banks were under absolute prohibition of revealing their affairs to anybody but we put so much pressure on the Swiss that they did modify them for purposes of this exercise, Safe Haven. Lawyers and so on were free to make their statements. However, none of the statements could be revealed to the Swiss tax authorities.

Q: You came back in what...1947, and made a lateral entry into the Foreign Service. Were you part of the Foreign Service at that time?

BACON: It was called the Foreign Service Auxiliary. It was pretty much on the same basis, I guess you could say, as USIA.

Q: How did you feel? I mean did you really want to get into the Foreign Service at this point?

BACON: Yes, I really did. What I'd seen, of course, in Switzerland was pretty attractive and I felt competent in many ways, particularly speaking German and French, and I'd also taken a little Russian instruction in Zurich which I never got to use anywhere. And I'd seen enough of the personnel of the Foreign Service to feel that that was where I wanted to be too. So I passed the examination and went back to Switzerland and was notified shortly that my next post was Hangzhou.

Q: Did this come as a bolt out of the blue, or had you made any noises to that effect?

BACON: I've forgotten now whether I made...I don't think I was asked for any preferences, but at this time generalization was in everybody's mind. The world was divided into three major areas: one was Europe; one was East Asia, South Asia; and the third was Latin America. Africa hardly figured.

Q: Yes, it was all colonial and we had practically nothing in there.

BACON: That's right. South Africa would have been part of the British Empire, at least from our point of view. And the Arab world was more or less South Asia, from our point of view, at least Middle East where it was centered. So the idea was that everybody should spend a substantial part of his life in at least two of those three areas. And I had no interest at all in Spanish America, so I wasn't particularly surprised it was the Far East.

Q: How did you get to Hangzhou? You went there in 1947.

BACON: We went by air—Zurich to Geneva, Geneva to Cairo, Cairo to Bombay, Bombay to Calcutta, Calcutta to Kunming, Kunming to Hangzhou.

Q: What did we have in Hangzhou, and what were you doing?

BACON: We had a Consulate General there; very, very small. Had a Consul and his number two, and a Vice Consul. Hangzhou had become a small town from our point of view. The Chinese, or some people, used to refer to it as the Chicago of China, which was nonsense. It was the head of ocean steamship navigation on the Yangtze River. But following the war all foreign shipping was excluded from the river, and the city was run by an administration which seemed to be interested almost entirely in what could be made out of it. For example, practically all of the industries had been nationalized during the war, or immediately afterwards. That included the steelworks and other factories across the river, and, of course, the ferry system. Well, the ferry system constantly lost money because there were too many people stealing rides on it, no fares being collected. Some of the factories were profitable, so the government made every effort to sell off the ferry system

to private operators who probably could make it pay, and retain the profitable industries which had nothing to do with government.

Q: Had Hangzhou been occupied by the Japanese?

BACON: Oh, yes.

Q: What was the situation there as far as the city went? Was it in bad shape?

BACON: It was not in very bad shape. It had electric power—not enough, but some. One of the problems was that all of the cast iron, and wrought iron, had been removed to be sent to steel mills, and that meant that none of the elevators worked anywhere because the cables had gone, and most of the fences were gone and the gratings over the gutters were gone. So if you weren't careful your right wheel would drop two feet when you got too close to the curb. I, of course, had never been before in Hangzhou and I'm not sure what it looked like pre-war but it had a university which had one or two American teachers there. It depended almost entirely, apparently, on monthly weather reports which were paid for by the U.S. That seemed to be its sole source of income outside of tiny Chinese government grants.

Q: What were you doing there?

BACON: When I came the Consul had been waiting for somebody to show up so he could take a vacation. I filled an empty spot, that was Kenneth Krentz, who later went to Taipei. So I acted during his absence and he did come back briefly but got his assignment to Taipei and left, and then for most of the time I was there I was the acting Consul and was succeeded by “China” Ed Martin—whom I see on your list.

Q: What type of work were you doing?

BACON: Just general consular business which was mainly looking after the interests, safety and well being of Americans there who were almost entirely either missionaries or oil company personnel.

Q: How were with the government—at that time it was Chiang Kai-Shek?

BACON: They were pretty good. No problems inside Hangzhou itself. It was the missionaries scattered around the country who were in difficulties. For one thing the local police had a habit of seizing their passports and holding them, for no reason. So I had a big stamp made covering a whole page of the passport saying that this passport is the property of the Government of the United States, and must not be taken except for examination, or inspection, and then immediately returned to the holder. I reported that to the Department which was somewhat incensed. They said, “You have no authority to make such a stamp.” But the missionaries were very grateful because it worked.

Q: I might add that I'm an old consular hand and made one bad mistake. You never report this sort of thing to the Department.

BACON: I was new.

Q: Did you have problems...were you reporting on the situation there?

BACON: Yes. We made reports, especially of the election which took place, I think around June of '48. It took days, and days, and days to get any results from the authorities, and Nanking was mad because Hangzhou hadn't reported.

Q: Nanking being our Embassy, which was located in Nanking?

BACON: Nanking, yes. And finally, what you would call the confidential clerk—the Chinese number one employee who spoke English as well as Chinese—said, “The real reason is that the so-called opposition party—Democratic Youth, or something like that—had

such a small turnout that they don't dare report the enormous support for the Kuomintang because it wouldn't look reasonable, and they're trying to adjust the returns enough to make a credible return out of it." So finally they did, and I reported it including the information that we got from the Chinese clerk. So, of course, Chang Kai-Shek was very successful but you could never tell. It was either more or less successful—in some cases the results were altered in favor of the opposition to make the report look real. In other cases, where there seemed to be some strong opposition, it was probably toned down.

Q: At that time was it your impression, and the impression of Consulate Hangzhou, this was real support for Kuomintang?

BACON: It's very difficult to say because the government around there was almost entirely military. It was the Hangzhou headquarters of the Generalissimo. And there was a four-star General who may have been the son of Sun Yat-sen, I'm not quite sure of that. In some of the correspondence it's mentioned; three lieutenant generals, and half a dozen major generals under him. I gave a party once and I didn't invite anybody under the rank of major general except for some colonels who spoke English, and could be scattered around to do some translating. People were rather light-headed. They couldn't see that the situation would ever change. It didn't seem at all likely that the Communist could ever get that far south, and there was no very heavy fighting going on then anyway. Following late that year after I went to Nanking, and of course through '49, the communists made their really big advances in Manchuria, and then in taking Peking, and then everything north of Yangtze, and then everything south.

Q: How did you feel about the impression of the communists?

BACON: I can talk about that better of the time when I was in Nanking.

Q: I was just wondering, in Hangzhou, I take it, it didn't play much of a part?

BACON: No. It did not seem to be anything that was imminent. We had stories from missionaries. Some missionaries had been murdered, not entirely clear by whom but probably by communists, and their bodies sent to Hangzhou for transshipment. The general impression though was not so much of fear, or support for communists, but a general feeling that things were going slowly worse, and worse, and worse under the Kuomintang. I can tell you a little bit on that. On everybody's mind, of course, was inflation. It was enormous. The Consulate had difficulty getting the money out to pay the staff every week. It would come in—these yuan notes tied in bundles. Nobody ever counted the notes in the bundles, it would take too long for what they were worth. As soon as we paid the staff each one would run out on the street and buy salt, which was simply something that had some stable value. At one time the plane from Shanghai which carried the money, failed to arrive and the Hangzhou police didn't get paid. What they did was to take direct action which didn't get them any money either, but they went to the branch of the Bank of China and demolished it. They simply tore it down, leveled it to the ground.

Q: This was obviously...you were looking at a situation that was unstable because of this.

BACON: There was almost no support for the Kuomintang except something that might stave off the communists for a while. But in the course of the year even that changed where people looked forward to the arrival of communists as putting an end to an almost impossible life that they were leading.

Q: This obviously becomes much more of a factor when you moved to Nanking. You went there when? and what were you doing?

BACON: I went there in July of '48, and I had several titles—the Chief of Chancellery, and Head of the Consular Section, and also suddenly Chief of Protocol. The Consular Section was very small because there were few Americans in Nanking outside the diplomatic corps, and those attached to the University of Nanking. It did have some business preparing diplomatic visas for the diplomatic corps wishing to go to the United States. Most

of the consular business, of course, was concentrated in Shanghai, and Canton. There was no recognizable American business in Nanking.

Q: What about missionaries?

BACON: There were quite a few, and some of them were on the faculty of the University, which was a Christian university. Also there was a women's college, Ginling, which was an affiliate of Smith College. It had some missionaries there too. The head of the school was a Chinese woman, and it was a very good school. After the communists came they had to adopt rather anti-American pose and put on a skit showing Uncle Sam in a stars and stripes hat, and a big nose, and doing some pretty ridiculous things but everybody recognized their heart wasn't in it. They had nothing against Uncle Sam, certainly not against Smith College.

Q: Here you were...I mean you had been in the war, you were not a young man at this time, and you had your Hangzhou experience, and you were then in Nanking. The Ambassador was Leighton Stuart, you had the other old China hands who later became a focal point of an awful lot of conservative wrath. What was your impression of the staff in the Embassy, its attitude at that time. Because you were somewhat a disinterested outsider. You were not part of any group.

BACON: Yes. Well, nobody took me as a political expert there, of course, and we had a number of people on the staff who were Chinese specialists—Ralph Clough was one. He is somebody you might get in touch with. He's at the Brookings Institution. And Joe Bennett who is married to a Chinese girl. He was in USIA. George Harris who is long retired and now living in New Hampshire. He had a very rough time because his first wife had belonged to some communist organization in the U.S. and this was thrown up to him over and over again especially after McCarthy. People made affidavits supporting him—so did I, of course—the business was dropped but he felt it best to resign and taught at

American University for a while. That was a very sad affair because he was a very good man.

Q: He's where at the university?

BACON: At American University for a time after he retired from the Department. Then he and his present wife moved to New Hampshire about ten years ago.

Q: Were you getting any feel for how...in the first place, what was Leighton Stuart like as an Ambassador?

BACON: He had been appointed, not because of any diplomatic skills really, but because he actually did know almost everybody of importance in China. He was very well liked by the Chinese, he was born in Hangzhou.

Q: He was president of the...

BACON: ...of Yenching university in Peking, the American University there. Many of the leading figures—not the top figures—but many of the non-military figures had been former students of his, and he believed that he had a gateway to the communist government through them, that he could, if not get things done, at least find out what was going on and what they were thinking. This turned out to be a considerable mistake. There were one or two people who would talk to him, usually not directly but through a third person to preserve their skins. Other people there on the Embassy staff, although not China specialists, nevertheless had been there before, and had been there for years since the war and knew exactly what needed to be done. The difficulty was that our government was slow in fulfilling its undertakings of aid. I'm not so sure that it would have made any difference at all anyway because so many agreements to provide actual cash and supplies were delayed. The supplies were slow in coming, the cash did come but very little of it ever got out of the hands of the Chinese hierarchy. And some extraordinary things happened. I mean, we provided a plane for the personal use of one of the leading Chinese generals

and at the time we departed the plane had never even been uncrated. It was still sitting in a warehouse. He presumably had an idea he would sell it to somebody—I've made that up out of my head but the fact is much of what we sent was never used, much that was used was either wasted or simply lost and abandoned to the communists as the communists came forward.

Q: Let's go to the time when you first got to Nanking. You already had Hangzhou, the Kuomintang, and this government really wasn't operating except for the rich men of its hierarchy. Was this the impression we were getting?

BACON: Yes. You got that impression pretty strongly because what we asked them to do, what they said they would do, did not get done. The people we thought we could rely upon would give us assurances without having any intention of carrying them out. There was a general feeling of despair really, that since the whole thing was going down the chute, the best thing to do was to look after yourself and your family. Generally in China it's true the family does come first. Your first loyalty is to your family, your parents, and your descendants.

Q: And this, of course, also is one of the reasons for not only safety, but for distribution of money and everything else. I mean money that came in is not just for your own personal use, but to the glory of Sun Yat-sen or what have you.

BACON: To do all you possibly could to see that their lives were liveable, which was scarcely true of many millions of people. As a result depression was enormous. We had staff meetings every day and I would go to them. Most of the information would come from the Military Attach# , General Soule. He later was the general for the Second Division, I think, in Korea. They constantly were hoping that the Chinese military, the Nationalists, would have some successes but city after city kept falling; first in Manchuria—that was the second big one there. Then cities around Peking, and finally Peking and it was felt that, “Well, they'd be stopped at some places between Peking and Nanking. We can hold

them for a while." But the Nationalist army had the idea that if they could hold the cities they could eventually tire out the communists. But this had been a failing policy for years, and years, and frequently instead of holding the cities, they would abandon them at the approach of the communists. This happened, of course, at Nanking. It was generally supposed that the Yangtze River being a mile wide would be an absolutely impossible barrier if there were any kind of defense at all. Well there wasn't any defense, and I recall very well as I guess most of the people Embassy do, the morning when we discovered that the communists were already in town.

Q: This was about when?

BACON: This was in April 1949. The walls of Nanking are over 20 miles in circumference, 30 to 40 feet high—of course, they're made of bricks so they could have been blown up but there was no need to do that. The gates were left open, the communists walked in. The Chinese government, and the police, had left town the night before knowing what was going to happen. There was a certain amount of looting that went on, some rather comical. I remember seeing some poor Chinese coming away from the Chief of Police's house with a water closet on his shoulders—absolutely no use to him, he had no water supply but it was a pretty impressive object. What was really comical was that a few weeks later in the fall, the communist government decided to make a historical event out of the capture of Nanking. We could see the cameras being placed on the top of the walls, the army approaching with scaling ladders, soldiers climbing up and getting on top of the wall, waving the flag, and everything else—something like the Berlin wall thing. And none of which, of course, had ever happened. They just walked in.

Q: Going back a bit, what was the attitude and preparations of the Embassy as they saw city after city falling. Was it pretty much, "Ok, here it comes. Let's get ready to welcome the conquerors. Or what were we going to do." Or was it false optimism that something would happen and that the communists would not take over?

BACON: First of all we were concerned about, of course, the missionaries scattered around northern China, and wanted to get messages out to them saying, “It's probably time to pack up and get out.” This, however, would have created a certain amount of panic, and also greatly offended the Nationalist government which was maintaining that there was no danger, everything was secure. So there was a great problem of getting out a message which would indicate that while the situation is unsettled, and so forth, anybody who is planning shortly to leave for the United States on leave or whatever, should do so promptly and trust that the situation will otherwise clear up. Well, we'd already done this a year before in Hangzhou, and I'd sent out a similar message there to the northern part of the Hangzhou area which was gigantic. Almost everything between Sian and Hangzhou and half way to Nanking in the northern part—there's somewhat over a hundred million people in the consular district. And finally when I got leave to do so I notified missionaries in certain places that it was probably time to move, and I got one or two hot replies that said, “Why didn't you tell us sooner? We've been waiting to hear from you. We expected to be warned.” But our position had been just reversed; we didn't want to warn too much because that would result in collapse of morale of the Americans there and consequently of Chinese too.

Q: Well, there were determinations made—I mean, this is always a major problem of telling Americans for purely practical reasons, “Get the hell out.” At the same time we feel beholden to—if its a friend of ours government—to say to pull the rug from underneath them.

Mr. Bacon, my question initially was, how did the Embassy as the communists get closer and closer, what was the attitude, or mood, of the Embassy?

BACON: Our attitude officially was that nothing much to worry about—no cause for alarm — don't get panicky. The time came, of course, just before the capture of Nanking, when the government itself moved to Canton. Our Minister Counselor, Lewis Clark, moved there

with a small staff. The Ambassador and the rest of the Embassy stayed in Nanking mainly because, I think, we wanted to be in touch with the communists if they came right in.

Q: Were you getting the feeling from your daily meetings that this was Ambassador Stuart's job, that they were saying, “Ok, they are going to come and we're going to maintain relations.”

BACON: We wouldn't, of course, treat them as the government of China until Washington decided, but that was considered to be pretty much a foregone conclusion, and whether it happened or not Ambassador Stuart felt that he would be in a very strong position to inform Washington as to what the communists were thinking, what their plans were. Because at this time it seemed possible apparently that a kind of a modus vivendi could be reached between the Nationalists and the communists. There might be a national congress composed partly of communists and partly of Kuomintang. After all, that's what the elections had been supposed to anticipate. But, of course, with increasing successes the communists were less and less interested in that, and it became apparent to them if to nobody else, that before long they'd have the whole country. So Ambassador Stuart remained in Nanking and saw, as I mentioned, a number of his former students and then eventually decided that he would have to go to Washington on consultation. And then we had this great problem of exit visas.

Q: What did the Embassy do...the Kuomintang officials had all left. This was in...

BACON: The summer of '48.

Q: And here the communist forces...

BACON: I'm sorry, the summer of '49.

Q: I was thinking it probably was the summer of '49. The communist forces came in...here's the Embassy sitting there, we don't recognize them. Well, we had not had an Embassy in Peking at that time.

BACON: No, we had a Consulate General.

Q: So how did these two forces meet? How did you deal with them?

BACON: It was a kind of minuet. We had almost no direct contact with communist officials for weeks and weeks. They opened their “office for aliens' affairs,” they wouldn't call it a foreign office. People had to go, when the railroad was reopened, to Shanghai for medical attention or something like that. It wasn't just us, but all the embassies there. Almost all of them remained with their personnel in Nanking. To get an exit permit you would firmly assert that you were the Ambassador of Jutland, or whatever. The clerk would take it and insert, “Former Ambassador of Jutland,” because they didn't recognize us, but we insisted that our diplomatic status, of course, continue. Sometimes they would write, “Bogus Ambassador.” This happened to the Dutch Ambassador, Van Aerssen, he was a Baron Van Aerssen. So they inserted, “Former Ambassador Van Aerssen, and the Former Baroness Van Aerssen.” We all congratulated her that it wasn't “Bogus Baroness.”

This also produced an interesting event. We were having labor troubles, of course, especially the USIA staff, who, I believe not really voluntarily, but anyhow they were used as a front, were demanding tremendous settlements in lieu, or in anticipation of, their retirement allowances. And since everybody was likely to have some claims outstanding, possible claims by Chinese employees, personal employees, possible debts to local suppliers, everybody of course, paid up—it didn't amount to much. But the communists demanded that a guarantor be provided for each person departing who could be held liable for any claims that might arise after the member departed. And I was chosen to be the guarantor probably because I had already been assigned to Dairen. Our Consulate there was in terrible trouble.

Q: This is Dairen up in Manchuria?

BACON: Yes. This had been undertaken several months before, but I could never get a visa to pass through Vladivostok, which was then the only way to get to Dairen—the Russians didn't reply. After the communists came in we thought we'd try to renew this effort since it wouldn't involve the Russians anymore. You could go directly from Manchuria to Dairen. That didn't work out either. And in the meantime I'd been signing all these guarantees even though likely to be out of the country myself, and therefore... And this was pointed out to me at once by the Chinese communists, that, “Aren't you the man who signed all these guarantees?” And I said, “Yes, but I'm not leaving China. I'm only going to Dairen. That's in China, isn't it?” They said, “Well, yes, but it's a little far.” Actually it was still occupied by the Soviets. Anyway, I signed altogether upwards of 30 such, but when they finally wanted us all out, bingo. Nothing more was said about these things. They were very anxious to get the whole kit and kaboodle out of Nanking. In fact, it was quite clear in the beginning of 1950 that they wanted all foreigners out of the interior of China. A few, necessarily, in Shanghai and Canton for trade, but otherwise the whole of China was going to be a closed box, with no foreigners except Soviets admitted.

The actual recognition of China began in October of '49—I think, it must have been about the 1st of October, or maybe the 10th of October. The Chinese government announced that it had been established as the sole government of China, and the following day the local papers announced that the Soviet Union had now recognized it. And then over the next few days different allied countries—Soviet allies—came with their recognitions. One of the early ones was, Yugoslavia, announced in the Chinese press— that had to be recalled as a mistake. Yugoslavia was not in good order, of course.

Q: Oh, yes. That's right. This was after the Tito break.

BACON: Yes. Long after but the Chinese hadn't been aware of that. So when the telegram came they proudly announced it, and then said it was a mistake, they never did. But the Yugoslav personnel told me, “Yes, they had recognized it.”

Q: Then what happened?

BACON: We were in the midst of these enormous labor negotiations with our employees and the settlement there. It became apparent that the communists wanted partly to demonstrate to the population that they were in charge, they could make the Americans jump over hoops, and call them to account for whatever they'd been doing. Also, they wanted hard currency any way they could get it, trying to levy fines on us for this and that, and so on. We had long negotiations with the USIA employees union, first before a mediation board. I recount some of this in these papers.

Q: We're speaking about some papers that we will append to this interview.

BACON: ...and it went on day after day, obviously not getting any place, or going to get any place. And one morning instead of breaking at the usual time around 12:00 for lunch, the discussion continued and I pointed out that it was after the usual lunch break, and they said, “Things are going pretty well, maybe in another half hour we'll all reach a agreement.” And I said, “That's not the way I look at it. Everybody is entitled to eat lunch. I have a chauffeur downstairs and he's entitled to his lunch hour, and it's already past it.” This sort of set them back but they said, “He's not a party to the dispute, so his opinion doesn't count.” This really got me, and I said, “If we don't break for lunch in five minutes, I shall consider myself under arrest.” And, of course, you're not supposed to lose your temper and make foolish statements but this created almost a panic. At that time William Olive had been arrested in Shanghai in connection with a traffic accident.

Q: Who is this?

BACON: William Olive, had been jailed by the Chinese for several days until he was released. This, of course, was a tremendous sensation—a consular officer jailed for a traffic accident which wasn't serious, and wasn't his fault. Anyway, what I said created a certain consternation and shortly after that they said, “All right, we'll break and come back at 1:15.” What had upset them was that if I maintained that I'd been arrested, even although there was nobody else to support that claim, still a report would have to be made as to what happened, and a number of people would be involved—all the people on the mediation board. And whatever the outcome, the reports and the decisions would all go into their personnel folders, and could be brought out years later and say, “Why did you do this at this time? And let the man out, or whatever?” So they decided apparently the best thing to do was to remove the cause for my displeasure and we broke off. Nothing ever came of it anyway because we went on to arbitration, which was the last stage before a trial, and we weren't permitted to go to trial because that really would have been a waiver of immunity. Arbitration was considered not exactly binding on the U.S. government. Those proceedings were even more public in a big room in a government building. I was on one side with my interpreter, and on the other side were all the complainants, and from time to time bunches of school children would be brought in to watch the proceedings, and to see how the local authorities—the communists—were bearing down on the Americans. So I decided I needed somebody on my side too, and invited some embassies to send representatives. Well, a young girl from the Dutch embassy said she'd like to come, and she came, and shortly afterwards was thrown out on the ground that there was no claim against the Dutch government, so she had no business there. That went on for several days but everything depended on the outcome of similar discussions in Shanghai, which involved scores and scores of employees, and they finally came to an agreement under which lump sum payments were to be made in lieu of annual monthly pension payments, provided however the payments, of course, would be made in U.S. dollars directly in the presence of communist officials. As soon as the payments were made, the Americans were excused and we know, of course, the dollars were immediately confiscated and probably local currency substituted. But this was again an example of the

extreme shortage of foreign exchange in the hands of the communists. They would do almost anything, no matter how petty, to get their hands on U.S. currency.

Q: Did you feel that you might not be able to get out? Were you concerned about getting out?

BACON: Not too much because there was evidently so much pressure to get us out. We weren't welcome. The only possibility was the possibility of actually being held hostage for the sake of collecting some more money.

Q: How did you get out, and when?

BACON: This was in March of 1950. By that time the Consulate General in Peking had been closed. All the Consulates in the interior of China had been closed. Our staff, what was left of it in Nanking, had proceeded one by one to Shanghai awaiting shipment and as it turned out I was evidently the last one to leave Nanking. We had some Termite...

Q: Termite being a chemical for causing fires.

BACON: It can burn metal. We used the termite to destroy our coding machines and other equipment of that nature—a big black cloud of smoke which resulted in some agitated inquiries from outside as to what was going on, but it was too late to do anything about anything. I had shipped most of the documents we had—put them in the hands of the British to hold in safe keeping until we could get them again. Also, our currency, both paper money and gold, turned over to the British who gave us receipts—at least, a receipt for boxes “said to contain so many gold dollars.” The Afghans wanted to know if they could store some of their furniture in one of our buildings, and we said, “delighted”, feeling that if another Asian country were occupying them they might somehow could be helpful. Afterwards the property was seized and the Afghans asked us to reimburse them.

So finally we were all in Shanghai and waiting for transport out. The Kuomintang had said they'd mined the mouth of the Yangtze and the harbor of Shanghai. It was probably not true, I don't think they were capable of doing it, but they said they had. And as a result no commercial vessel would venture in, no matter what. So finally it was arranged that the General Gordon, which had been a troop carrier, would pick us up at Tientsin. A train was arranged—a regular train with some Chinese carriages—took us up one night to Tientsin where we waited for two or three more days. Passing through customs they were anxious to see that we weren't taking any valuables out of China. I had some little wooden statuettes of Manchurian warriors—I don't know what they came from, a restaurant, a tomb, or where, but they were for sale in a curio shop. We had to have lists of all of our possessions and I thought these might be too attractive. Anyway, they were listed as toys so there was no demand to see them.

The General Gordon, of course, couldn't come to the dock in Tientsin, it was too big a boat, so we boarded lighters to take us out to the ship. It was too rough for the lighters to approach so we waited overnight—some of them came back to shore. And eventually within 24 hours we were all on board the General Gordon which went to Hong Kong, and at Hong Kong the President Wilson, I think was the ship that carried us back home.

Q: Could you describe what was your reception back in Washington? Here you'd been through this at a time when our China policy was under great scrutiny.

BACON: This was a very nervous time in Washington. I think there must have been more than one Congressional committee that was interviewing people right and left trying to find as much as possible to lay against the Democratic administration. Truman was re-elected in '48, wasn't he? So he was still in office until '52, and this was still 1950. So anything that could be pinned on the Democrats for having lost China was hunted down, and people who had just come out of China especially so. I had found out already that I'd been assigned to Strasbourg in order to look over the affairs in the Saar which would eventually have a plebiscite there as to whether they wanted to stay under French control,

or revert to Germany. And almost everybody in the Office of Far Eastern Affairs seemed to be concerned with meeting in Congressional committees, and defending what had been done, and trying to enlighten the committees on what could be done. My own experiences were not of any very high political level. And as I mentioned, I was not debriefed by anybody.

Q: Before this interview started you mentioned this is the first time you've talked to anybody about this. I mean nothing was put on the record and that was 40 years ago.

BACON: That's right. A friend of mine, Frank Kierman, who is still teaching at Ryder College near Princeton, once remarked to me (he made this remark 10-15 years ago) that it was simply extraordinary that there had so far not been any published account of what actually went on in China during the first year of communist occupation. Which is rather amazing, except that under the circumstances there was nothing much good that could be said as far as our government was concerned.

Q: We were just hanging on.

BACON: Just hanging on and hoping against hope that things might turn out.

Q: Just what overall impression—was it your impression that really the United States as a power or something, really had much control over what was going on in China at the time. There is a phrase, "Who lost China?" and it seemed to be that it was somehow the attitude of the American Government that we lost China

BACON: The thing is, in some respects we may have done it, contributed to it. It seems to me that whenever we try achieve a political end by using aid, either cash, or trade, or goods to strengthen the government that we favor, we always over do it by an enormous amount. And it soon becomes apparent to the locals, that if the U.S. is willing to throw money around like this, why should we bother? Obviously the U.S. has such a huge stake in the outcome of our difficulties that we can rely upon them to take care of the

situation. In the meantime, we'd be fools not to take advantage of it personally. I think this is perfectly obvious in Southeast Asia—Vietnam, for example—and in large parts of Africa. In Japan, and in Western Europe, nothing like that happened because you're dealing with governments which had themselves plenty of experience in managing their own affairs, and in collecting and spending money on a big scale, with the consent of the population. There was a time—this sounds almost incredible—the Chinese currency went through the roof at least three times when I was there; shortly after I arrived and again in '48 when the Chinese government abolished the old currency and said, “We're instituting a gold yuan, and everybody is supposed to contribute any gold and silver he has, and we'll give him gold yuan notes which will be redeemable in gold, not right away, of course, but you can rely on us. Trust us.” That went through the roof within a few months. There came a time, and I was told—I don't have it on paper, and I never saw a paper supporting it—that somebody in the Chinese government said, “Why don't you buy up all our currency for U.S. dollars and then we can start fresh again.” In other words, at that time it would be the U.S. instead of the local population which would sacrifice all their ready cash for another round of that inflation. I don't know if that was actually said or not, but it sounds perfectly possible.

Q: Can we talk about your next assignment because it sounds quite interesting. You were sent to Strasbourg, is that correct? And what were you doing there? This was from 1950 to '54(?).

BACON: Yes. This was in the late summer of 1950. I was sent there to be a number two, but actually to spend all my time in the Saar. The Saar is a part of the very old French-German combination of iron ore in Lorraine, and coal in the Saar basin. Since the time of Louis XIV they've always been under one administration, in effect. Louis XIV captured part of the Saar and built forts in there. Of course, he didn't have much in the way of steam power at that time but the local French steel industry, and the German Saar coal mines would be sunk without access to either the raw material on either side. And after the war the French thought there was a chance to get the Saar back again under French control

and they set up a special district which would be in economic union with France under the same French customs, French taxation, but would still have a cultural autonomy of its own. Although they did their best to make French attractive to Saarlanders, sent the Com#die Fran#aise there for performances, and so on, rebuilt the opera house. This worked pretty well for a while, partly because they benefitted by the French repopulation law, which gave huge benefits to parents who had a certain number of children, at a certain rate of speed, and Saarlanders needed no encouragement that way, they'd have had them anyway, but they got the benefits. Eventually all of this began to pall, and Germany after the restoration of its economy, and its currency, began to look better and better. Long after I left a plebiscite was held, and as expected they voted to rejoin Germany and the French took it in good order. There was nothing much they could do about it anyway.

That was a project for which we had really no responsibility and we didn't have to do anything except to indicate our general support of French position on the matter, but a position which our support was not absolutely unbreakable. After about three years of that, I was sent to the NATO Defense College in Paris, the easiest transfer I ever made—just get in the car and drive. That has a course of about five months and I was directed to remain there as a member of the faculty for another three courses, back to Washington for career development unit in Personnel, and after a year of that to Laos as number two in the Vientiane embassy.

Q: You were in Vientiane from 1957 to '59. What was the situation there at that time.

BACON: It was very quiet. Vientiane is a country which—well, it really should have been in Micronesia or some place like that beyond the reach of land based forces. It has almost no economic importance. It has a little bit of everything, but not enough to make it commercially viable, either of ore, or silver, or whatever. Living is very easy for the Lao. They can sit under a tree and pick the bananas as they fall and that's all they need to do. The gross national product per person was said to be $50.00, which may have been high. The only thing required was a little bit of home made dress, and you could build your own

house as long as you kept it about four or five feet off the ground. Consequently, Laos was not attractive to anybody, but part of it was occupied by local communists in the north, and that part of the country nobody ever visited naturally. But it was only a sort of a jungle area in the extreme north near China, and North Vietnam. So nobody was much concerned about Laos, knowing that the country was indefensible; if Vietnam went communist so would Laos. Knowing also that its other big neighbor, Thailand, would probably not take any steps to help the Lao at all. In fact, they were decidedly unhelpful. The only railroad access to Laos was on the Thai railway and Thailand imposed enormous tariffs for goods destined for Laos—two or three times what it would charge for goods which would stop on the Thai side of the Mekong River. So that even foreign aid paid the price for that.

Q: But since this is a tape you have to tell it—we're looking at a map now of Laos and Thailand.

BACON: The railway comes up to here about 20 miles southeast of Vientiane. There is no bridge so everything would have to be unloaded and put on boats to cross the river, and there isn't one yard of railway in Laos—never has been.

Q: Politically...you got there...I mean it began to heat up considerably at the time you were there. Here was this basically rather sleepy place, and all of a sudden this became a focus of the Soviet Union, the United States. Did that happen while you were there?

BACON: Oh, yes. There already was there in the government a faction sympathetic to the communist. The wife of Souvanna Phouma, who is a metisse—that is a half breed—was quite a smart woman and she apparently could tell which way the wind was really blowing, and didn't make much of a secret of her sympathies.

Q: Towards the communists.

BACON: Toward the communists inside the government, that is. Really a distinction was drawn—you see, those would be Lao communists, and not Chinese communists.

So it wasn't considered such a devilish thing to favor the kind of reform which the Lao communists claimed to be in favor of. Our aid program there was very slight because, first of all there was virtually no such thing as Lao army. They had a training cadre and that was about it. And the possibility of commercial aid almost didn't exist because there was almost no commerce in Laos to begin with. So there wasn't even much of any room for us to deploy skills and our equipment. Laos didn't even have a newspaper.

Q: What was the attitude of the Embassy towards the...first it was Graham Parsons, and then it was Horace Smith as Ambassadors, both career men. What was the attitude of the Embassy towards the communist side of the Laotian movement and also the North Vietnamese?

BACON: We were quite concerned about the communist elements because they had been successful anyhow all over East Asia. I think there must have been some feeling among the Lao that they couldn't possibly get very far in Laos because the thought of working your head off for the government, or anybody, never occurred to anyone. We were somewhat more concerned, I guess, with the plantation of opium poppies, not because that trade was so tremendous, but the locals in the woods and on the hills would burn off the tops of the mountains as a favorable place to plant seeds, but there was only a few inches of soil, and directly underneath was laterite which is a very hard stone, I suppose probably volcanic. Once the tops of the mountains were burned off the soil would be washed out by the rain, and more and more of the country would be denuded for the sake of the opium which was shipped out through Burma and Thailand. That was more of a concern, and the local government, of course, was opposed to it too, except that it was a source of revenue.

Q: Had the Laotian crisis...that came a little after you left.

BACON: It was building up all the time. Horace Smith was very determined to prevent a crisis from really happening, but it did, nevertheless. It depended a lot upon the military

reports from Vietnam. If the south Vietnamese had been clearly successful with our help, we could have expected an echo of that in Laos. But things went the other way.

Q: You were the Deputy Chief of Mission then. What sort of guidance were you getting from Washington? Or was this very definitely a back burner operation?

BACON: It was pretty much a back burner, because it was, I believe, seen that what happened in Laos would reflect faintly what was happening elsewhere in Saigon, and Bangkok, and Rangoon.

Q: What were the major problems you had to deal with?

BACON: It certainly wasn't trade because there wasn't any, not even the usual consular problems of visas, because the Lao who had the money and could travel usually went directly to France without stopping anywhere on the way. So all they needed to do was apply to the French embassy. The big event was the conversion of currency with U.S. support. The kip, the local currency, had gradually deteriorated, not so fast as, certainly in China, and probably not so fast as in Vietnam either, but it was in effect inconvertible. You couldn't buy anything outside of Laos with kip, not even in Bangkok. So an effort was made, as had been previously elsewhere, to issue a new currency backed up by hard money, namely the U.S. dollar. That was very well received but it didn't last very long either, because once again the government found its expenses greatly exceeded its income, and the only way out is to print more money.

Q: Of course, this is an unclassified interview, but what was your impression of the role of the CIA at that time?

BACON: The role of the CIA seemed to be largely a matter of strengthening the hand of both the government and the military, such as it was. There was almost nothing to be discovered in the way of the usual targets of the CIA, and it was primarily a political operation.

Q: But they didn't have the huge apparatus that later developed there, the private armies, and almost private territories, and all that at the time that you were aware of?

BACON: No. Without doubt some of the local military had their coteries and cliques.

Q: We have but it's more trouble than it's worth. You left Vientiane when?

BACON: In '59—I think it was the spring.

Q: What job did you have then?

BACON: Then I became the deputy in Northeast Asian Affairs.

Q: Northeast Asian Affairs covered what area?

BACON: It covered Japan, Korea, and initially China, but eventually it was just Japan, Korea, Taiwan and the former Japanese islands like Okinawa.

Q: How long were you in Northeast Asian Affairs?

BACON: About four years.

Q: What were your primary concerns that you were dealing with particularly in that period.

BACON: Of course, the situation in Korea, supporting the Korean government with which we were intensely involved. And Japan, which had not yet become the industrial and commercial power that it is today.

Q: Let's talk a bit about Korea. You got there in '59, and the situation in Korea, certainly economically, was terrible.

BACON: Yes.

Q: And Syngman Rhee was in his declining years; was very much in control. How did we view Korea at that time? Did we see any hope for it?

BACON: Yes, there was lots of hope for Korea. Syngman Rhee was really doddering and more or less had to be propped up when people came to call on him. But the Korean government was full of energy, and very determined to recover the missing years under Japan, and to become a strong competitor. There was also some hope that if South Korea did well enough, why North Korea might soften up and look for some kind of combination. That hope didn't amount to a great deal so long as North Korea had Russian support.

Q: How about the developments...I think it was 1960 when the students overthrew Syngman Rhee. Do you recall? Were we just sitting back, or how did we feel about that at the time?

BACON: I think we were quite optimistic because Rhee had ceased to be a very active and effective head of government, and there were plenty of Koreans who could fill his shoes. Of course, we would hope that any transfer of power would be done by elections and have the support of the population.

Q: I only have interviews on two sides, one with Marshall Green who was our Charge in '61 when Park Chung Hee took power, and with Donald McDonald who was the desk officer for Korea in '61 where there was a sort of a hiatus. You had the new Kennedy administration coming in, Walter McConaughy as Director for Asian Affairs was feeling very...I mean, it was obviously a transition, he wasn't going to stay there. And we have, at least, Marshall Green saying that he spent about three days on a very lonely limb with no decision on, did we support, what were we doing...there had been a rather ineffective, but it was a democratic government in power there, and no direction from Washington, and he said, "We support democracy," when there was a strong element within the government which was sort of delighted, particularly the old Korean military saying there's a ___ coming in. How did this play as you saw it?

BACON: I think Marshall Green was quite right on that. Park Chung Hee was not our favorite by any means but worse things could have happened.

Q: As a matter of fact, coming to my own biases, that despite everything he probably was the right man at the right time for Korea; getting the economy back into shape despite the other things he did; but at the time there was a lot of pressure coming from different sources. I was wondering how you dealt with this?

BACON: I'm surprised to find myself kind of a blank on this probably because there wasn't any particularly strong pressure in either direction. Joe Yager might be able to give you some help on this.

Q: All right, I'll talk to him. What was the major concern that you had in dealing with Japan during this period of time?

BACON: I think the major concern must have been that Japan should not do anything which would undermine our efforts in East Asia. In Taiwan there was concern that Japan might attempt, economically at least, to reoccupy the island. There was a concern to try to reconcile the Koreans economically and financially with Japan because there was an intense enmity which wasn't doing Korea any good. They, of course, were worried, and probably justifiably so, that if the Japanese came back in any kind of strength, why, Korea would economically be part of Japan again. There was also concern that Japan would try to take advantage of our unwillingness to do any dealing with communist China, that Japan could benefit from that by acting directly with communist China. And, of course, we still had MacArthur—that is, Ambassador MacArthur and others in Japan.

Q: Douglas MacArthur II.

BACON: Yes. And right now I couldn't tell you that particular presence was finally wound up. Well, it still is there but...

Q: It's still there in Okinawa.

BACON: But we're no longer in a position to tell the Japan what to do with their foreign trade activities.

Q: Did you notice any change—I mean for your position, when the Kennedy administration took over in 1961 regarding your area of responsibility?

BACON: Not particularly. The whole business of China...of course, communist China was, as I said, a separate desk. The Kennedy administration seemed to be just about as cautious in dealing with the problem as anybody else, knowing that any overtures toward communist China on our initiative, would be badly taken here in the U.S. I don't recall that anything was done in that direction but, as I say, communist China, which included Hong Kong as far as the organization of the Department was concerned, was pretty much of a separate undertaking.

Q: You left the Foreign Service in 1964?

BACON: That's right.

Q: Looking back on this period, what gave you the greatest satisfaction?

BACON: I'm afraid it was the immediate post-war period that gave me the greatest satisfaction.

Q: This was a time, of course, when we really felt we had an active role.

BACON: An active role, we felt absolutely sure that what we wanted was the best for everybody, and that, by gosh, we were going to be able to put it over.

Q: We can always add to this at a later date, and you can also edit anyway you want but this has been very interesting. I appreciate this.

BACON: I'm glad to hear you say so.

ATTACHMENT 1 TO LEONARD BACON TRANSCRIPT

December 11, 1985

Dr. Isaiah M. Zimmerman 3106 Chain Bridge Road, NW Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Dr. Zimmerman:

I had been looking forward very much to your remarks last night on The Hostage Crisis, and when the meeting broke up I felt richly repaid. As I mentioned, I had had a very mild exposure to the business in Nanking in 1949-50. If you will permit, I have a couple of anecdotes to dispose of.

1) After the fall of Nanking in the Spring of 1949, the first of a series of reductions in the Embassy's American personnel began. To our surprise, permits of leave were withheld by the authorities until guarantees of payment of all personal debts were given. Guarantees by me were acceptable, being the principal consular officer, even though such titles were not recognized. There were to be no exceptions. When Ambassador Leighton Stuart was called home for consultations after failing to establish contact with high Communist authorities, he was denied an exit permit until a guarantee should have been provided. He replied that his persona was its own guarantee, and that he would remain until allowed to depart freely. The authorities backed down, but guarantees were still required for others until my own departure in March, 1950. In the meantime we were restricted to the diplomatic compounds, then given the freedom of the city, but no more, except for medical attention in Shanghai. I had earlier been transferred (on paper) to Dairen, but the Soviets had withheld a transit visa via Vladivostok, and now it seemed I might be able to go directly from Manchuria. But exit permission was denied; I had signed upwards of 30 guarantees, hadn't I? and how could I ever be made to pay? I objected that Dairen was still in China, WASN'T IT? Well, yes, certainly; but it was a little far away—. As far as I

know no claims were ever presented on the guarantees exception for separation payments (usually one month's pay for each year of service by personal domestics, and the whole operation seemed pointless to me—until by chance I discovered that in the 18th century a Russian diplomat has been asked to leave the Hapsburg court because of his wild life and generally unsuitable behavior, but his passport was withheld until he produced an Austrian to guarantee payment of his personal debts. Among his friends were the Liechtenstein and Razumovsky princes, and the guarantees were provided. (You could look it up in Oppenheim.) But what a comedown, to have to settle for me! Anyway, I have no doubt that the Soviets put the Chinese up to it; they have long memories, and they could always point to the precedent.

2) To reduce the Embassy's Chinese staff it was necessary to fix their separation allowances. The authorities demanded lump sum payments (which they could seize) in place of the monthly pension payments provided by U.S. law. Until Congress should act, we couldn't comply even if we wanted to, so there was an immediate stalemate. Nevertheless, there had to be daily negotiations from August into October. My interpreter and I sat at the center of one side of a very long table, the other side being occupied by a string of officials, augmented by a number of militant USIA employees. One day at noon I suggested that it might be time to separate for lunch. This caused a little stir; evidently the American was getting tired as well as hungry. After a brief huddle they declared that we seemed to be so near agreement that in thirty more minutes it should be possible to settle our differences completely. I disagreed; we could work better after the usual break. Response: We would take a vote; this was the democratic thing to do. I objected that the majority opinion would have nothing to do with my physical requirements; furthermore, I had a driver downstairs who was a laborer like anyone else and was entitled to regular working hours and mealtimes. Response: He was not a party to the dispute and therefore his opinion didn't matter.

Now at this time Angus Ward, our consul general in Mukden, had been thrown into jail; William Oliver, a vice consul in Shanghai, had also been jailed; and the administrative

officer in Shanghai had been imprisoned for several days in his own office by a sit-in of some of the Chinese staff. So I lost my temper, which we all know is the last thing a diplomat should do, and said, “If we don't break for lunch in five minutes, I shall consider myself under arrest.”

This produced another huddle and agitated whisperings. If the foreigner was determined to become a prisoner, then a written report would have to be made to higher authority; and obviously no one had been empowered to make an arrest. And a report would not only create an immediate little stir, but would also be placed in several personnel folders for possible extraction years later for some unpleasant purpose or other. So a one-hour recess was declared. Nothing was accomplished one way or another because Nanking had become a small backwater after the departure of the Kuomintang; everything was decided in Shanghai or Peking. Still the charades went on. Our military Attach# , General Soule (who later commanded the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea) was simply denied an exit permit for obscure political reasons; this time we went to mediation and then to arbitration. If we had failed there, we would have had to give up because the next step would have been the People's Court and consequent surrender of our supposed diplomatic immunity (or so we thought). But settlement was suddenly reached, apparently because the authorities couldn't agree themselves on what their position in court should be. Meantime, whole platoons of grammar and high school children had been brought in, day after day, to see how the People's government could humiliate the foreigners. I thought I should have some witnesses of my own, and a young female secretary at the Netherlands Embassy agreed to come, which she did, full of curiosity. She was denied admission on the ground that the Netherlands was not a party to the dispute.

Hostage-taking, Chinese style, seemed to require justification in Western precedent, if not law. The aims appeared to be (1) acquisition of foreign exchange as quickly as possible; (2) demonstration that foreigners (especially Americans) had been atrociously exploiting Chinese labor; (3) humiliation of American officials to prove to the Chinese public and officialdom that Mao was a much more powerful man than Chiang; (4) that the USSR

was China's only important friend and the only one she needed. In this Russian tutelage seemed pretty evident. The establishment of the People's Republic was announced on October 1, 1949; recognition by the USSR on October 2, followed on October 3 and successive days by Bloc countries in the order of Russia's affection: namely Bulgaria and Romania, then Hungary and North Korea; then Czechoslovakia and Poland; then Outer Mongolia. Albania was said on October 22 to have sent greetings “recently” and recognition on November 21. Yugoslavia's recognition was reported among the very first, but a hasty attempt was then made to correct the record; it seemed that nothing had been received from Yugoslavia after all. Obviously all of these telegrams had been received within the first 48 hours, with the possible exception of Albania's.

And the whole hostage exercise had been just a preliminary to the expulsion from inland China of all non-Bloc foreigners, private and official. Some favored few might be allowed to reside in Canton and Shanghai, and possibly Tientsin, to facilitate a little trade. This was a near total surprise to us; in 1917-18 Lenin had done his utmost to persuade Americans not to abandon their posts in Moscow and Leningrad, and in the 1930's the Spanish anti-fascists had done the same with regard to the American consulate in Bilbao, all in the hope of proving the legitimacy of their cause and of obtaining needed aid—or at least a benevolent attitude on our part. But the opinion in China was that they could obtain all they needed from the Soviets, and it can hardly be doubted that the Soviets had assured them of this. On the other hand, it was probably the Soviets who restrained the Chinese from excesses such as have been seen in Iran, Pakistan, and Libya. After all, at that time we had the Bomb, and the Russians didn't.

You must forgive this garrulity, and I should know better than to give way to it. In 1944-45 I would from time to time interrogate POW's, and I know quite well how eager they are to spill a lot more than they should into a willing ear.

Very sincerely,

Leonard Lee Bacon.

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ATTACHMENT 2[To Harry Grier, Director, Frick Museum, N.Y.C.]

THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Strasbourg, France

January 10, 1954

Dear Harry,

Your extremely welcome Christmas card—1952—was delivered to me last May, which accounts for 5 months delay; the remaining 7 are unaccountable. Since I am not sure that I've given any news of myself since September 1945, will you put up with a quick tabulation:

1945: July-August—Loitering around State Dept corridors; signed up for investigation of German assets concealed in Switzerland—the ill-fated “Safe Haven” operation (the Swiss wouldn't really play ball);

September—Simultaneous exit from Ft. Meade and the AUS; declined reserve rating;

October—FBI clearance completed; assigned to Zurich; get Helen out of Rochester and install my mother as real estate manager;

December—Depart on Vulcania for Le Havre; loudspeakers reminding us that ship is an Army transport; that civilians there are on sufferance; food entirely C-rations but goosed up by Italian cooks; all hardware stolen by Germans, which made for intimate living;

1946: January-December-Safe Havening in Zurich and Bern, enlivened by having to take a deposition from two International Red Cross workers on behalf of SS-Gen. Kaltenbrunner, (did him no good; he came to a sudden end as foreseen in the verdict) with which I wangled a trip to the Nuremberg trial to deliver same; inspected with interest Goering, Hess, Schacht, Ley, von Schirach, etc.

1947: January—Notified that I was eligible to apply for appointment as Foreign Service Officer if I could pass oral examination;

February—Did so.

June—Appointed FSO-4 and assigned to Hangzhou. (Where the hell is that?) Instructed to proceed “soonest”.

August—Helen and I complete cholera, yellow fever, malaria, tetanus, typhoid, paratyphoid shots; depart ex-Geneva for Cairo by plane, over Rome, Pompeii, Corinth, Athens and Alexandria in one day which gives you the feeling of having reduced a long and expensive classical education to an absurdity; in Cairo one day, long enough to fall into the clutches of a dragoman; off again for Bombay where an extra horse-dose of antitoxin (India dimensions) knocked us out; a week later Calcutta by Indian Viking plane (choice of box lunch—veg. or non-veg.); a few hours of darkness in Calcutta in the world's worst hotel, the Great Eastern, built 1810 and not kept up; over the Little Hump by China National Airways to Kunming (one night); taxi freight plane next day to Hangzhou (so that's where it is); brought into town by kindly Britisher; quite hot on Yangtze; principal officer surprised to see us; telegram announcing our approach delivered following day. Settled down in Terminus Hotel, Chinese run; actually the worst hotel in the world.

September—Principal officer confided that reason for “soonest” in my travel orders was fact one vice consul was sick and other had resigned in disgust; whereas he himself wanted to take a month's leave in a cool place like Peking; which he immediately did. Left in uneasy charge of office. Made acquaintance of innumerable Chinese generals composing Hangzhou Hdqrs. of the Generalissimo; also of Standard, Shell, and Texas Oil people; also of missionaries (Polish, Irish, French, British, Belgian, Swiss, and American, ranging from Adventists and Beth-El missions to Anglican and R.C.). Learned to throw pants and coat as well as shirt and underwear into laundry every day.

October—Principal officer returned and left on transfer within a week for pleasant post in Formosa. New principal officer assigned from Shanghai. On day of expected arrival sent telegram he was obliged to return to the U.S., much as he regretted wife's illness prevented him from seeing one of his first posts again. Dept non-plussed, but in view impossibility getting any experienced officer into Hangzhou, left indefinitely in charge.

November—Raised my own salary in accord. with regs., by # the difference between mine and that of last previous officer-in-charge.

December—Communists arrived within 30 miles of Hangzhou, but went away. Two American and 1 Finnish missionaries murdered by “bandits”.

1948: January—Bodies of murdered missionaries arrive. Open coffins to ascertain cause of death and report same. Cause of death evidently bullet holes under base of skull (rear).

March—Communists come near, but go away again.

April—Transferred to Embassy, Nanking (on paper).

May—Helen and chattels depart for Nanking on Army plane, while I wait for replacement to arrive. Cardinal Spellman and Msgr. Sheen hit Hangzhou, joint party thrown in Consulate with Roman clergy (Archbishop of Hangzhou, Portuguese; Bishop of Hanyang,

Irish-Boston; Bishop of Wuchang, Polish) because only Consulate had the space and only the clergy had the liquor required. Contracted streptococcus infection in foot as result of walking barefoot from bedroom to bath. Inspector arrived, out of sorts because Consular sedan hadn't met him at airport across river and skeptical of reply that only the jeep could make the grade on the Wuchang side in the low water season. Banquet for Generalissimo's Hdqrs.; guests were General (full) Sun, 3 lieutenant-gens, 7 major-gens (where we drew the line. After all!) plus a half-dozen educated cols and lt-cols spotted around the table solely as interpreters. Great success; served brandy, whiskey and creme-de-menthe as cocktails. Creme-de-menthe the most popular, on account of its pleasing color... Recovered from infection with help penicillin administered by Chinese doctors and nurses.

July—Replacement (brand new graduate of Dept language school at Peking) arrived. Departed for Nanking. Receive reserve commission as captain.

August—Appointed Chief of Chancery (which seemed to mean needling everyone behind on his work) and Protocol Officer (oh for God's sake, what'll we do now) and Chief of consular section. Same Inspector arrives to inspect Nanking. No casualties.

September-October—Having made some real advances, Commie situation much worse. Navy sends converted destroyer to evacuate people's stuff. Wives with children go to Manila. Truck detail loading destroyer.

November—Destroyer makes several trips. Truck details every few days. Army Advisory Group departs. Come down at month's end with infectious hepatitis.

December—Having turned yellow, hepatitis is identified for what it is and original theory of malaria discarded. Deposited in Army hospital; next day hospital is evacuated and Marine plane takes me to Navy hospital ship “Repose” at Tsingtao. The best month in my life—air

conditioned, nice Navy food, nice nurses & all. Helen arrives two days later in RAF plane, but not allowed to sleep on ship, so digs in at Tsingtao club.

1949: January—Right after New Year's, “Repose” ordered away because of imminence of Commie capture; Helen takes physical exam and finds an operation necessary; is flown to St. Louis. I try to pay “Repose” bill for her and me and am told they'd really rather I'd drop it; no one knows the procedure for billing patients. Air Attach# flies me back to Nanking.

February—Convalescent period indicated for four weeks; materialized for two. Embassy wives sneaking back from Manila, which was too G.I.

March—Assigned to Dairen to relieve wretched consul, who couldn't get downtown without seeing his chauffeur arrested every time. (This assignment was perhaps supposed to benefit my small store of Russian, which had been acquired in Zurich and Hangzhou.) Agreed, provided Helen could come too. Dept agreed to that, probably unaware of fact Helen was already in the U.S. Apply for Soviet visa at Soviet Consulate in Shanghai, since only permissible entry to Dairen was by Soviet ship from Vladivostok. No encouragement.

April 10—Helen arrives by plane.

April 20—Communists move in fast and take Nanking. No fight whatever, but no one allowed to leave compounds in which Embassy situated.

May-June—Commies ignore us completely, except to prohibit movement out of town.

July—Ambassador's attempts to establish communication with local authorities having failed, Dept recalls him on consultation and orders 2nd reduction in force at Embassy. Nationalists start bombing power plant, etc, which they failed to blow up on leaving. Embassy gets a little shrapnel; no damage.

August—Separation of part of Chinese employees turns out to be difficult; although they are civil service on same terms as anyone in Washington (except for wage scale,

naturally) they refuse to accept separation allowances provided by law. Maneuver is Commie inspired, in order (1) to embarrass us (2) to make propaganda about how Americans exploit Chinese (3) to realize some dollar exchange, since separation payments involve purchase of Chinese funds at National Bank. As only lawyer in Emb, all labor trouble negotiations fall on me.

September—Labor troubles worse after Ambassador goes. Department orders 3rd reduction in force, this time including counselor of embassy, 1st secretaries. I am promoted by attrition to senior officer in charge, with total staff of eleven. Air, Army and Navy attach#s leave. Marine guard goes. Separating Chinese staff of attach#s falls to me.

October-December—Hell of a time with Chinese labor, Labor Union, Labor Ministry, especially regarding employees of Foreigners' club. Army attach# refused exit permit (he was General Soule, later commanding 2nd Inf Div in Korea). Dispute goes to mediation board, then to arbitration board. Just when we thought we'd have to give in, because submission to People's Court would have meant renunciation of our supposed diplomatic immunities, settlement reached because Commies themselves uncertain what to do next. Army radios me a commendation. (By this time all officers were learning cryptography.)

1950: January—Just ready to relax, with everybody out that's supposed to be out, when Commies proceed to seize our old Legation premises in Peking. Result: All U.S. establishments in China ordered closed. More trouble with remaining Chinese employees, including domestic servants. Commies try to fine us for not having paid duty on American goods imported under Nationalist privilege years before. No soap. Everything wound up by end of February; as each member of American staff received exit permit (but only to go to Shanghai) Casablanca (that's me) put him or her on the train. Finally my own was issued, but then canceled until a little matter of motor pool supplies cleared up. Permit re-issued on a Saturday; spent Sunday destroying radio equipment after sending farewell telegram; and took off Monday hoping Commies wouldn't hear about that for a day or two.

March-April—Goldbricking around Shanghai, waiting for transportation out. Nationalists claimed they had mined Shanghai harbor; Commies unable to sweep harbor or prove it unmined; no foreign shipping would come in. After all sorts of schemes cooked up, none of which worked, Commies authorized departure by Tientsin. 36-hour trip on train to Tientsin, bring your own food and drink. Water soon gone. John on our car had to be locked shut, entailing long journey by women and children to Chinese end of train. Recall wife of naval attach# seizing my arm and saying, “Have you seen Sam (her husband)?” I said No, why? Reply: “I've got to go to the john, and he's wearing the rubbers.” Everybody in unspeakable condition on arrival. But things went fairly smoothly from then; in a few days boarded lighters to take us out to “Gen. Gordon” (army transport run by President Lines) lying off Taku Bar. Too rough to come close, so spent night bouncing around; some lighters went back to shore for shelter, which alarmed passengers more than storm could have. Magnificent reception early next morning on board Gordon; crew briefed that China was starving, hence the foreigners must be practically litter cases. Treated accordingly; but in fact we'd been eating steak till it came out of our ears because the farmers, unable to buy fodder, had been slaughtering their cattle for months. But Navy Sam was grabbed by a steward who urged corn flakes and milk on him, saying he must be famished, what with all that starvation. Sam said, Well, it wasn't too bad; although sometimes truffles were hard to find. Steward: “Truffles—what's dose?” Sam: (embarrassed) “Well, it's hard to explain; truffles you have to dig up out of the ground.” Steward: (awed): Jeez, you mean to say you really ate dose tings?”

May-June-July—Hongkong, then on the Wilson to Tokyo, Honolulu and San Francisco; blissful. Never saw the Coast before, nor the Grand Canyon, so sight saw all the way to St. Louis. Found a letter for me at Washington from the Personnel Section; conveyed the news that my efficiency rating put me in the lowest 10% of my class. Noticed a few minutes later that the letter was more than a year old and that the rating was for the year 1947-48, immediately following my appointment; the usual rating for newly appointed or promoted men. Found few people to talk to about China; those immediately concerned

were tied up with Congressional committees. Accepted appointment to Strasbourg to look after the Saar, and thankfully took off.

August-December—Strasbourg, learning about the Saar and the Council of Europe.

1951: January-October—Reporting on same. Motor trip to North & Central Italy.

November-December—In Washington as member of Selection Board, rating others for promotion up or selection out, and hoping to do as little harm as possible, either way.

1952: January-December—Saar, Council of Europe, and standing in for U.S. delegate to Central Rhine Commission, an ancient supranational organization in which we participate (originally as trustee for German interests). Motor trip to Yugoslavia (car abandoned at Fiume, a/c roads; boat and plane thereafter; Dalmatian coast not quite what you'd expect, unless maybe the extreme south; but Split and Dubrovnik and Julian Alps in North and the mountain scenery between Sarajevo and the coast are. Ran into Tito's motor convoy on the road between Bled and Ljubljana. Curious contrast between Commie bad manners in China and Commie stiff politeness in Yugoslavia.

1953-January-December—Still Saar and Council of Europe, seem to have permanently replaced U.S. delegate in Rhine Commission. Motor trip to Spain; thrown out of Toledo Cathedral for indecent exposure—elbows clearly visible. Sign in Granada hotel lobbies warning foreigners that if they wear clothes cut so as to “reveal their interiors” they may well incur the “just indignation of the populace”. Spent two nights in a Government hostel within the Alhambra (a remodeled little monastery); Alhambra and Generalife unexpectedly illuminated at night, since they were trying out the floodlighting for a music festival to be given a few days later. Our mouths hanging open in most Spanish churches, sometimes more in surprise than admiration; usually nothing but admiration for Spanish domestic and civil architecture. For taste and effect I think the Barcelona city council house is almost unexcelled. Moreover I think both Italian and Spanish early gothic has a kind of astringency (if the word is allowed) and unregulated originality—usually resulting from

the disposition of the rooms within—which keeps it always fresh. Look at the palaces in Siena and Perugia.— Army invited me to convert 5-year commission into an indefinite one; declined; Army renewed invitation in June, a couple of weeks before expiration date; accepted, feeling embarrassed at my own lack of enthusiasm; received new diploma for indefinite commission and immediately afterwards warning that a board would meet to recommend my dismissal for having failed to earn points entitling me to promotion, but that even though I was not in a critical occupation I could show cause why I shouldn't be dismissed, as for example impossibility of attending lectures and training courses. Replied I didn't intend to show any cause, and have since heard that I am out, as soon as I turn in my identification card. Haven't any, and never had. Inglorious end to an inactive career (Res). But the original idea of applying for a commission (under the regulations in force in 1947-48) came from a residue of vexation at the blessed old CIC, in which you had been good enough to recommend me for a field commission, later approved by Corps, and (so far as I know) finally denied because the Table of Organization didn't allow for it. So I got it, and now it's been summarily taken away; easy come, easy go; and anyway I must have been overage in grade, at least in this Air Force era.**********

ATTACHMENT 3 BEHIND THE BAMBOO CURTAIN: A NANKING DIARY [1949] April 21: It seems clear that it is only a matter of days before the Communists enter the city. The compound where we live, which adjoins the American Embassy, now has a tank destroyer against the gate as a barricade. The electrified barbed wires which run around the top of the high wall enclosing the compound have been re-tested. The Embassy's military, naval and air attach#s have gone into civilian clothes. Mob violence and looting are to be expected in the interim between the old authority and the new. But war and violence seem an improbability, - the weather has never been more beautiful. From our living-room window we can see Purple Mountain to the East, bulky and handsome, a number of fresh, green hills running southwards from it, three of them crowned by the observatory, the Drum Tower and the pagoda tower of Nanking University. The sky is a wonderfully clear and delicate blue.

April 22: Went to Ambassador Stuart's house last night to see the weekly movie, - this time, Boyer and Bergman in The Arch of Triumph. We got home about a quarter of ten. A short time after we had gone to bed, we heard the noise of guns to the north. Looking out of the window, we could see large orange flashes against the sky. The explosions seemed to be getting louder. Looking at his watch, Lee estimated that the firing was coming from about two miles away. We were rather apprehensive, but finally fell asleep about two o'clock. Today is coolish and overcast. I heard that Major Gelwicks and Captain George had gone off in a jeep on some mission which took them into Communist infiltrated territory. In the afternoon, I was in a car with Mary Lou Clough on Chung Lu. We passed a huge truck, filled to over-flowing with Nanking policemen. The truck was blowing along at a breakneck clip. “They're probably on their way to quell a riot!” said Mary Lou, swinging her car out to give them a wide berth.

April 23: Sunny and warm. Last night we heard gunfire again, but not so much as the night before. Just after breakfast while I was bargaining with the flower-seller, George Harris came out of his apartment saying that during the night, all the Nanking police had evacuated. It was a great truckful of them on their way out of town that Mary Lou Clough and I had seen on the previous afternoon. The city now had no protection. The looting had already begun. Mrs. Soule, the wife of the Military Attach# , said that mobs had broken into the house of the Mayor of Nanking, who had flown from the city. The looters had run off with all the furniture and were now ripping up the floor boards. The Mayor's house was just two blocks away. I walked over to the Embassy. Several people were saying hasty goodbyes, as a car was waiting to take them to the airport to catch what proved to be the last American plane out of Nanking before the takeover. At lunch, Lee said that Major Gelwicks and Captain George had probably been captured by the Communists. From our veranda we could see a large amount of black smoke to the north, — undoubtedly the location of the large, modern railway station. We had heard that the Kuomintang soldiers had set fire to it before they evacuated the city. It was a beautiful day, and I went for a walk in the grounds of the Embassy Club adjoining our compound. Silky fluff from the

budding willow trees was blowing everywhere in feathery masses. I walked under some great heavy fronds of blossoming wisteria, deliciously fragrant. Beyond the grassy slope shaded by big trees was the swimming pool, not yet filled. Behind the little bath pavilion, where last summer had been a tidy cutting-garden, was now a great quantity of crates and jerry cans. On my way home, I ran into Dr. Packard, the Embassy doctor, who had just gotten back after a hard and hazardous trip. He had gone in a jeep to give medical help to the wounded British sailors on the Amethyst, out of commission since it had been fired on some distance down the Yangtze. Late in the afternoon, two large fires could be seen to the northeast. The smaller of the two had a steady orange glow, but the larger one, farther to the east, tossed up frequent rocket-like flares, accompanied by muffled explosions. In the deepening blue of the twilight, the flares lighted up huge, billowing clouds of smoke with fluctuating, flame-colored light. It was an ever-changing show, a fascinating and awesome sight. Dr. Packard telephoned and asked if I could spend the night at the Embassy hospital with Mrs. Meyer, and her baby daughter, who had been born at five o'clock that morning. Miss Poon, the Embassy nurse, who had helped Dr. Daniels, of Kou Lou Hospital at the time of the delivery, hadn't had any sleep for thirty-six hours, and no other nurse was available. I told him I'd be glad to help out.

April 24: About a quarter of eight last night I took a flashlight and made my way to our little hospital on the second floor of the Embassy Club. The lights had already been dimmed for the night. Miss Poon introduced me to Mrs. Moyer, who, with her baby, was on a large, glassed-in porch adjoining our hospital “ward.” Miss Poon prepared the mother and baby for the night and then retired to her own apartment in another part of the building. Mrs. Moyer was the 21-year old wife of an army Major who had been studying Chinese in Peiping. She had been with the group of wives evacuated to Manila several months ago, then had come to Nanking, where her husband was to join her. Having still been in Peiping at the time of the Communist takeover, he had only very recently obtained permission from the Communist authorities to leave. At the moment, he was thought to be in Korea or Japan. I had never touched so young a baby, but I put on a mask, and Miss Poon

showed me how to shift its position, change it, give it warm water and burp it. Shortly after Miss Poon retired, the baby began to hiccup. Holding it against my shoulder and patting it smartly on the back didn't seem to help, - it kept right on, - and on. So I telephoned Miss Poon. She turned the baby this way and that and the hiccups magically subsided. Around ten o'clock the Club generator stopped working - no lights - so I had to operate by lantern and flashlight. About 10:15, Lee dropped in to tell me goodnight, and say that it was thought that the Communist troops would be in the city about seven o'clock in the morning. During the night occasional loud explosions rattled the window panes. Gunshot in various directions could be heard frequently. The shots were very near. The noise of the firing didn't disturb Mrs. Moyer. She was tired, and slept well until about three-thirty. She woke then and took the tablet and water Miss Poon had left for her, and slept on till morning. The baby cried a good deal during the night. I frequently got up from my cot to take care of it, donning the mask each time. I was very awkward. It was so tiny, and its little head so remarkably wobbly. It seemed a miracle that it could cry to lustily, and sneeze and hiccup in such miniature but perfect fashion. About a quarter of eight in the morning, Miss Poon came in, and I went home through the little gate between the Club compound and the compound in which we live. It was a beautiful fresh morning, but I longed more than anything for coffee and a bath and a little sleep. When I got to the apartment, Li Shank-I, houseboy, told me that the Communist troops were already in possession of the town, they had come in very early in the morning. Everything was very quiet. There wasn't the accustomed obligato of peddler's cries and rattles, Chinese conversing, and chant of people carry loads. The servants were obviously relieved that the takeover hadn't been a shooting matter in our area, anyway. Some ice-cold fruit juice, a feather-light omelet and some fragrant coffee quickly appeared, and while I was eating Lee came in. He said that at about 5:15 in the morning Hank Lieberman, the Nanking New York Times correspondent, had telephoned that the Communist troops were coming into the city through the northwest gate. There had, apparently been no resistance to speak of.

April 25: Yesterday we had lunch at the George Harris'. Jo and Nancy Bennett (Jo is the United States Information Service man here), were there; also Shirley Duncan (she is connected with the United States Educational Foundation in China as is George Harris, who is also the Embassy's Cultural Attach#). Nancy is Chinese; she and Jo met when they were both at Yenching University in Peiping. She is a bright girl, and her comments are refreshingly astringent. Someone remarked that at the airfield the day before, it was amazing to see the tremendous quantity of abandoned shoes, strewn all over the place. (When the Nationalists crowded onto the planes in the panic of evacuation, it had been necessary to reduce the weight of the overloaded planes in every possible way; hence shoes had been shucked off wholesale and tossed out onto the ground as the motors warmed up for the hasty and hazardous take-off.) This lunch at the Harris's was the first gathering together of Americans we had been to since the “liberation” a few hours before, and there was much speculation on how events would shape in the next few days. Shirley had been interned during the last war by the Japanese, so that “disturbed conditions” were no novelty to her. The Harrises have an excellent cook, who, incidentally, has two wives. The change in regime which had just taken place did not distract him in the least from producing one of his pieces de resistance, - thinly sliced cold breast of chicken covered with a creamy aspic, cut to resemble playing cards, with hearts and diamonds of pimento, and spades and clubs of ripe olive, superimposed thereon. I was enchanted with this manifestation of Oriental calm and whole-souled absorption in art. After lunch, Lee and George drove around town to see what they could see. The town was full of Communist soldiers. They were in good physical shape and marched well. Their uniforms were of a more brilliant mustardy-Chartreuse than those of the Nationalist soldiers. They had paid no particular attention to the car with the two foreigners in it. The Chinese chauffeur, however, showed obvious relief when the drive was over.

April 26: Lee was awakened by a telephone call at seven o'clock yesterday morning. Communist soldiers were in the Ambassador's house “going over things”. Lee dressed hurriedly, swallowed a cup of coffee and rushed off. About ten o'clock he came back

for a bite of breakfast. It was true. Several Communist soldiers had brushed by the Ambassador's servants, and broken into his bedroom while he was still in bed. After blustering awhile, they departed, one of them saying, with a large gesture “All this will soon belong to the people!” In the afternoon, Lee accompanied General Soule, the Military Attach# , in his attempt to find the commanding officer of the occupying troops. General Soule wished to deliver a vigorous protest from our government over the morning's incident. He received no cooperation from a Communist captain, who was the only officer he was able to contact. It proved to be impossible to find out who was in charge of the military forces in the city. The Gordhamers invited me to drive around with them and see how the city looked. Everything was very orderly. There were some, but not a great many, Communist soldiers to be seen. However, there were armed guards at the entrances of all banks and public buildings. We saw the roofless, fire-gutted Judicial Yuan on Chung Shan Lu, once a large, impressive building. It had been looted and burned by Nanking citizenry on Saturday, between the time the Kuomintang police fled and the time the Communist soldiers came into the city in the early hours of Sunday morning. We also visited a little park, on high ground, which had been adorned with some attractive pavilions in Japanese style. The place was a shamble. It was obvious that most of the looters had had no tools, - nothing but their own two hands to wrench things free. Nevertheless, the devastation was appalling. Much of the attractive planting and a long double row of lantern posts had been hacked away for firewood, and the substantially built pavilions were gutted. On our way back to the Embassy, we stopped for a few minutes at the home of the former mayor of Nanking. The handsome house was utterly ruined, - furniture gone, windows broken, floor boards ripped up, plumbing torn out. In the garden, were two radiators, which, having been wrenched out, were abandoned because they were too heavy to lug away. In the road were three others, left behind for the same reason. Inside the house, several children were playing among the debris. One was walking, tight-rope fashion, on an exposed overhead beam, with loose electric wires dangling around him. Another was handily binding together the few remaining splintered floor boards to take home for firewood. Mr. Gordhamer said that he had talked with some of the looters on Saturday when they were busiest. They

showed no qualms of conscience about what they were doing; they merely said they were poor people and needed the things. Most of the property left unguarded between the time the Nanking police left and the communists took over were badly looted and partially or wholly destroyed by the Nanking citizenry themselves. The condition of the mayor's house was a particular shock to me because I had been there several months before to a large meeting of the International Women's Club. Then the house had been beautifully ordered, and servants in immaculate white gowns had passed tea and frosted cakes to the guests, and Madame Shen Yi, the mayor's wife, had been a gracious hostess. While we were at supper, someone telephoned that a Communist soldier was at the Embassy gate. Lee put down his knife and fork and rushed out into the dark. However, it developed that all the man wanted was a piece of wire and permission to get electric current from the Embassy's generator. He was told to refer the matter to his commanding officer. It was then we learned the Communist soldiers, brushing by the caretaker, were now occupying the empty Embassy house at 5 Nighsia Lu, formerly occupied by Carl and Phyllis Boehringer.

April 27: We have heard that Major Gelwicks and Captain George reached Shanghai safely, but now can't get back here where their families are. About ten o'clock, Mrs. Soule came to call. Her daughter, Ginsy about fourteen is at the Shanghai American School. Communication, of course is now cut off between Nanking and Shanghai, and it is thought that Shanghai will be the next big objective of the communist troops. She is very anxious. She said she just couldn't settle down to anything. No one is now allowed to leave the compound where the Ambassador lives, however, I heard that Frank Kierman succeeded in reaching the Embassy on foot, coming by a back way. When Lee came home to lunch, he said he had gone with General Soule and Captain Frankel, the Naval Attach# , in another attempt to find the commanding officer of the soldiers occupying Nanking. The car had gotten only a few blocks from the Embassy when it was turned back. In the afternoon, I wandered over to the Embassy Club. Captain Frankel, the Gordhamers and one of the members of the orchestra were engaged in a game of doubles. Hank Lieberman had just finished a game. He had on a shirt with a plunging neckline and shorts of the

same printed material. On his head was a khaki cap with a long searching eyeshade - all very picturesque. He ordered drinks all around. I learned that Seymour Topping, the Nanking Associated Press correspondent, was under house arrest, or, as his newspaper colleagues might call it, in “homeside pokey”.

April 28: At first two, and later six B-24's made bombing runs along the south bank of the Yangtze, to the north of us. They were trying to hit the city power plant. We had a fine, wide view of it all from our roof. The servants were clustered on the upper back porches and roofs of the three houses in this compound, and followed the operations with excited comments and pointings. We could hear the explosions of the bombs and see the grey smoke arising from what they hit. There was a chatter of anti-aircraft fire and we could see the black puffs of smoke from it high in the air. Apparently some machine guns were being used, too, which, of course, were completely futile. The show went on all morning. Quite a crowd of people collected on the roof, including Colonel Dunning, the Air Attach# . There were intervals of some minutes between the bombing runs. The tantalizing aroma of the curry our cook was preparing for lunch was wafted upwards and made everyone hungry. The whole foreground of this air display was a typical Chinese rural scene. There were rolling hills, knobby with old graves, covered with the chartreuse green of early spring. There was a pond with two ruffly brown ducks swimming on it, an old man in a coolie hat cultivating rows of cabbages. Mud walled huts roofed with dried grass stood here and there in the patchwork of vegetable plots. The bright yellow of the flowering grape was in sharp contrast with the blue-green of the young cabbage. The bombs hadn't touched the power plant, but, I heard later, a school was hit and a number of children were killed. Shortly after lunch, Lee telephoned that Communist soldiers would not allow Major Beebe to go into his house, that he was bringing him home to stay with us for the time being. That morning, a Communist soldier had walked into his house and got to his bedroom while he was still in bed. The soldier was a simple country lad, and had apparently invaded the house out of an overpowering curiosity. Satisfied after a few minutes, he departed without taking anything or doing any damage. We heard that the Counselor of the French

Embassy had had a pistol held to his stomach by another Communist soldier, and another member of the Embassy staff had also been threatened with firearms. The Turkish Charg# d'affaires was confined to his compound; no one was allowed to go out or in, even to bring food. Mr. Jones, the Counselor of our Embassy, had attempted to come to the Embassy offices from his house, on foot, had almost reached the Embassy when he was rudely turned back. We listened to the news at 9 p.m.. The Chinese Communists were converging on Shanghai, and British planes were alerted at Hong Kong to evacuate British Nationals from Shanghai should the need arise. Nothing was said about Nanking. The focus of interest is now elsewhere!

April 30: Heard that a Kuomintang plane had dropped leaflets saying they would bomb the city tomorrow, May 1st, when a big Communist celebration had been planned.

May 1: There was a little Embassy church service this morning just for the people in this compound, as no one else can get here. Mr. Long had just begun the 23rd Psalm, “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want” — when Bomb! went a big bomb, — quite close, rattling the window panes. Mary Lou Clough and I exchanged glances. Mr. Long went right ahead. The communists decided against having their big celebration that day.

May 2: People are now being allowed out of their compounds, and the foreigners' playground in the Embassy Club. The two tennis courts and the swimming pool are enthusiastically patronized. There are bridge tables under the trees. The children of the diplomatic group, followed by their amahs, chase all over the grassy slopes. One or two babies, parked in carriages, are in shady places under the lofty trees. The Chinese boys, shite-coated, with their trousers bound neatly around their ankles with strips of wide cloth, pass around trays of cool drinks. The enforced leisure does not appear too hard to take, at the moment, anyway. I heard that during the past week, when the American Embassy people living at 84 Shanghai Lu had been confined to their compound, the Volley Ball and Gimlet Club had been organized. Gimlets are the favorite Nanking summer cocktail. Hank Lieberman said with some truth that really the greatest hardship sustained by the

diplomatic group during the days following the takeover was the growing dearth of Rose's Lime Juice, one of the essential ingredients of a good Gimlet. John Beebe has now been allowed to go back to his house. We understand that the troops that took Nanking were former Nationalist troops that defected at Tainan, last fall.

May 11: To the Canadian Ambassador's for lunch. Miss Tincolli, of the Italian Embassy, was the only other woman present. I was dazed at the amount of rank present, — The Egyptian and Belgian ambassadors, the Papal Nuncio, and the Polish and Turkish Charges d'Affaires. Everyone seems to be enjoying the forced vacation. One August diplomat said that when the Mayor's house was looted, he had seen a coolie making off with three W.C.'s. Heard that the Communists soldiers had been borrowing cooling utensils from foreign diplomats' establishments, but so far, had always returned them afterwards.

May 13: Walked to Shanxi Road Circle. The occupying soldiers seem very much at home. When I was returning, a soldier guarding a driveway, ordered me, with a preemptory gesture, to walk in the road. I felt a sense of shock and outrage at being ordered to do something by someone holding a gun. It was a sensation I had never had before, and it was very unpleasant. We are awakened very early in the morning these days by bugle reveilles, very loud, oft repeated, with many sour notes painful to hear. The bugles begin as soon as there is the faintest suggestion of dawn. The bird, whose call sounds like someone say, “One more bottle!” also makes noisy the early morning hours.

May 26: Shanghai has been taken.

June 7: Had a small lunch for the Canadian Ambassador, with the Jequiers of the Swiss Legation, Mrs. Van der Hoeven of the Dutch Embassy and the Harrises.

June 15: Lunch here for the Liebermans, with the Bennetts and Mary Lois Kierman (Frank is in Shanghai). I had not been able to go to their wedding last Saturday at the Ambassador's because of the inflamed eye. Kay wore her wedding dress here to lunch so

I could see it, and brought me a big hunk of wedding cake. They are going to Shanghai as soon as they can make arrangements. Somehow they have to get the New York Times jeep there, and don't know if it is best to drive it, put it on a train, or take it down the river on a Chinese junk. It is still most unclear what the Communist authorities will permit. Hank said, “This is going to be a honeymoon with some special gimmicks to it!”

July 4: Fourth of July Reception at the Ambassador's house for just the Americans in town. It was very pleasant, but a great contrast to last year's huge affair, with the whole diplomatic corps, members of the Army Advisory group and great numbers of Chinese officials attending.

July 12: Ambassador Stuart here for lunch. Other guests - the Philippine Charg# d'Affaires and Mrs. Adeva, the Cloughs, the Kiermans and Dr. Packard.

July 15: For some days, now, I have been doing volunteer teaching at the American School which has been reorganized since the Communists came in. Since the former school building is full of war refugees, an empty house at 1 Pu Tu Lu belonging to the Embassy is being used. The school furnishings have come from the most amazing number of sources. Jack Wolf, of Caltex, found playground equipment in the yard of the house he was living in. Being a bachelor, it was a constant source of wise-cracks, so he was more than glad to hand it over to the school. Seymour Topping of the Associated Press donated a piano. The school hours during the summer are from 8:30 a.m. to noon. There are about thirty foreign children of several different nationalities, mostly from families of the diplomatic group. Some of the children have only a partial knowledge of English, but they are unusually intelligent and get on wonderfully well together. We had our first air raid the other day. When the warning siren sounded, the school assembled in the large ground floor room where the library and piano are. Above the children's hubbub, a number of planes could be heard overhead, bomb explosions, and very near, loud anti-aircraft fire. Only one or two of the very young children appeared to be frightened. I asked the children around me what they'd like to sing, and they said “America” and “Old Black Joe”.

It seemed very strange to have two little girls from India, one from France and one from England singing lustily, “—sweet Land of Liberty, I love thy rocks and rills, thy woods and templed hills” right in my ear during an air raid with Kuomintang planes droning loudly overhead. “Old Black Joe” with its “I'm coming, I'm coming, to a better land I know”, to an Adult would hardly have seemed a cheerful choice under the circumstances, but it was just what they wanted. They all sang with so much noise and fervor that we didn't hear the “All clear” when it sounded. There were several in the school who had been in London during air raids, and they were the most philosophical of all.

July 17: Had the William Olives for lunch. They are going on the plane with the Ambassador to America, as soon as arrangements can be made for its departure. William Olive was the vice consul in Shanghai, who was unjustly imprisoned by the Communists from July 6 to July 9, mistreated, and made to sign a “confession” under duress. Mr. Cabot, the Shanghai Consul General also arrived in Nanking yesterday, and will go on the Ambassador's plane also, as will Mr. Hinderer, the Embassy's Administrative Officer. The crew will be: Colonel Dunning, the Air Attach# , pilot; Major Van Ausdall, who is also a pilot, Sergeant Menczer, radioman, and Sergeant Fillingame, mechanic.

July 21: It is terribly hot now, with the oppressive Nanking summer humidity in full swing. The season of the one More Bottle Bird is over. He has been replaced by the shrill cicadas. On a hot summer night, the voice of insect life has amazing volume. At lunch time, Li Shang-I told me there was a big fire at the Military Attach# 's Office, which is near the 84 Shanghai Lu compound, where the Ambassador lives. It was not until we were at dinner at Tom Cory's and Bob Anderson's that night that I heard that Corporal Ryan, one of the Marines, had been seriously burned when a can of gasoline exploded. A bamboo fence on fire near a quantity of gasoline had menaced several cars and the building. Someone said that eighty percent of Corporal Ryan's body was burned — first, second and third degree burns.

July 23: Mrs. Franke telephoned me and asked me if I could be at little Embassy hospital from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. the next day to help nurse Corporal Ryan. Everyone had been taking turns. Lee had been asked to be there from 12:30 to 2:30 a.m. as George Harris relief. Lee, in turn, would be relieved by Ralph Clough, who would be there from 2:30 to 5:30 a.m. Lee left the house with a flashlight about ten o'clock. He was going to work at the Embassy until time to go to the hospital.

July 24: I didn't hear him when he came in, and he slept late. He said he had cracked ice for the many ice bags. Two English nurses had been secured, a woman, and a man, a Quaker, who was here on his way to the hospital far inland, when the Communists came in. I heard that the other Embassies and Legations had offered to do volunteer nursing — they wanted to do anything they could to help. I put on my white dress and low white shoes and went over. Miss Poon, the Embassy nurse, Mrs. Frankel, and several other people were there. Poor Ryan was in the large adjoining glassed-in room. He was all bandages except for the top of his head where one could see his short, boyishly tousled blondish hair and his strong, sturdy young feet. (He had been wearing only shorts and shoes at the time of the fire, and those were the only parts of him that had been somewhat protected.) Someone told me that his eyes had not been hurt and that if he recovered there would probably be no scars on his face. There were slits in his head bandage for his mouth and his nose and he was being given oxygen through a rubber nose tube. On his left ankle, just beyond the bandages was a cruel-looking blister. The area over his heart, which did not appear to be badly burned, was left free of bandages, so that Dr. Packard could apply the stethoscope from time to time. I had been told that his pulse had to be taken in his foot,—his wrists and temples were buried deep in bandages. There was an unburned area on his right side where Miss Poon gave him injections of penicillin and morphine. Electric fans were blowing cool air, and there were about twenty ice bags of various sizes against his legs, arms, sides, shoulders and head. It was my job and Mrs. Glyer's to fill and re-fill these bags as the ice melted (it was very hot). A Chinese was kept almost constantly busy in the adjoining bathroom cracking off pieces of ice of the

proper size from a big block. Gensy Soule, General Soule's daughter, was there, and had been helping almost continuously. Ryan would occasionally speak and Ginsy would lean down to find out what he wanted. Although his voice wasn't loud, it sounded normal and full of vitality. His chest rose and fell evenly. He seemed so young and full of soundness and health. That the burns could conquer seemed incredible. From time to time, people dropped in to see how he was, — Mrs. Soule, Captain Frankel, Colonel Dunning and a number of others. Lt. Deering came in with some boards to elevate the foot of Ryan's bed. Later, the nurse wanted him to drink. He said: “I'd like to have a drink, in New York!” He didn't want to drink, and it was vitally necessary. Orange, pineapple, apple juice; broth or coffee were suggested. Then someone said, “How about some gingerale? Mr. Davis, the Canadian Ambassador sent it over for you. It's right here.” Finally, he drank a little through a glass tube. Mrs. Glyer said to him: “Come on, drink with me — we'll click glasses!” He protested; “I've drunk such a lot, I can't drink any more.”

July 25: We have heard that Ryan is much better today, — his temperature has gone down, and that he is able to take plasma again. (For some reason, it had become impossible for him to take it two days ago.) I said to Lee: “He's going to get well now, and everyone who's helped with the nursing is going to feel a proprietary interest in him!”

July 26: We are having air-raids every day or so now. I thought of the extra helplessness of Ryan at such a time.

July 27: Yesterday afternoon, the sky became very dark, and a torrential rain beat down. Suddenly, Ryan's temperature went up and up and up - over 108. At seven in the evening, he died.

July 28: Corporal Ryan, was buried today in the presence of his comrades and the diplomatic Corps, in the little foreign cemetery, near others who have died far from home.

August 1: We continue to have air-raids, — there were about five today. All the arrangements are complete for the departure of the Ambassador's plane, — it is scheduled

to take off at eight tomorrow morning. It will go to Okinawa, where the passengers will change from the C-47 to the B-17; thence to Kwajalein, Johnston, Honolulu and San Francisco. I'll continue to keep this informal diary, and put down things as they happen — and there doesn't seem to be much doubt things will keep on happening!

End of interview